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SUBJECT: SPECIAL ADVISER ON AFRICA LEGWAILA: 'UN CAN'T
BABY-SIT SOVEREIGN STATES INDEFINITELY'

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¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. In a June 14 courtesy call, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa Legwaila Joseph Legwaila (formerly Special Representative of the SYG for the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea) shared his 'professional peacekeeper' views with Ambassador Bolton on the proliferation of conflicts on the African continent and the 'dependency syndrome' suffered by some of the countries that host them, in particular Ethiopia/Eritrea and Somalia, making reference as well to East Timor. Legwaila was clearly looking for a way to apply his prior SRSG experience to his new position and was receptive to Ambassador Bolton's mention of the Peacebuilding Commission.
END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) In a June 14 courtesy call, U/SYG and Special Adviser on Africa Legwaila solicited Ambassador Bolton's support for the efforts of his office in dealing with the African Union and the New Partnership for African Development to address crises on the African continent but was quick to point out that he was 'professionally a peacekeeper,' most recently having spent the past several years as SRSG for UNMEE. Legwaila acknowledged USG diplomatic efforts to resolve the stalemate and said he had been hopeful for progress on the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea after the first two meetings of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC). Now, however, Legwaila considered that any window of opportunity which previously existed to have shut, with Eritrea's refusal to lift restrictions on UNMEE having backfired and instead resulted in the unintended consequence of serving as a precondition for Ethiopia's participation in border talks. The biggest tragedy in the situation, according to Legwaila, was not so much the \$186 million annual price tag, but rather the fact that neither country could afford to sustain such a stalemate.

¶3. (SBU) Ambassador Bolton agreed with Legwaila's assessment, noting that the situation illustrated what can happen when a peacekeeping operation becomes part of the underlying problem between countries. The Security Council, Ambassador Bolton contended, must remain politically involved in the missions it sets up, rather than deciding a mandate and deferring

subsequent responsibility to the SRSG. Ambassador Bolton observed that the profusion of peacekeeping operations, political missions and SRSGs hindered the ability of the international community to resolve the underlying issues in African internal political conflicts, making it all the more difficult to determine when the situation might be sufficiently stable for the UN presence to withdraw and for the national government to assume responsibility.

¶4. (SBU) In this context, Ambassador Bolton disagreed with SYG Annan's assessment that the withdrawal of UNMISET from East Timor contributed to the subsequent unrest in that country. Legwaila concurred with this analysis, noting that the resurgence seen in East Timor could be attributed to the incompetence of the government, which, unlike the governments of Namibia and Mozambique when the time came for the UN to disengage, was unable to measure the 'probability of success' in the absence of an international presence. Legwaila noted that some countries suffer from a 'dependency syndrome' on UN peacekeeping, hoping the UN would stay forever to prevent fighting. However, Legwaila declared, 'the UN can't baby-sit sovereign states indefinitely,' especially when to do so might jeopardize development and foreign investment in such states.

¶5. (SBU) Legwaila was not optimistic in assessing the AU's prospects for success in handling African conflicts. Using Somalia as an example, Legwaila doubted the AU could play a role in the current crisis, despite the fact that the crisis was brewing 'in its own backyard.' He anticipated the AU to deal with Somalia as it had Ethiopia/Eritrea: to go 'on leave' for the duration of the conflict and to re-surface when there were credit to be taken. Ambassador Bolton suggested that the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) could eventually play such a role, provided that it focused its efforts on the ground rather than in New York. Legwaila was very receptive to this idea and expressed a readiness to

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contribute, adding that he had spoken with ONUB SRSG McAskie about the PBC in a meeting during the week of June 5.
BOLTON